Scripture: Genesis 37 v 3

“Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he *was* the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of *many* colours.

Subject: Standing on the Shoulders of Giants.

Pastor Brian has introduced us to this subject of Standing on the Shoulders of Giants. It is a great subject to consider and causes us to reflect on the people who have had a bearing upon us, setting us an example to follow, clearing a path in front of us so we avoid the things that would be a hinderance in our Christian life.

The giant I have chosen to speak about is Joseph, the son of Jacob who endured extreme suffering and at times isolation and slavery. Joseph’s life teaches us, how to endure in the face of hardship and be an example to succeeding generations.

In speaking about Joseph, I want us to stand on his shoulders and see how he handled the crises in his life.

Standing on the shoulders of Joseph will enable us to see beyond the present difficulties and see how the intervention of God will see we are not defeated. There are four specific phases Joseph experiences during his life, each phase teaches us something from which we can learn.

1. He Experienced Jealousy.

The root cause of the jealousy Joseph experienced was the coat of many colours his father bestowed on him. His brothers saw it as Jacob favouring Joseph more than any of them, which they deemed as unfair.

Jacob was an old man when Joseph was born, prior Joseph’s birth Jacob probably thought his days of having any more children were over, his birth may have been a surprise, so when Joseph was born Jacob was delighted and lavished love upon him.

Joseph was precious to his father; his father sought to protect him and so gave him what seemingly was more than he gave his brothers. The root of their envy was birthed in the home when they witnessed favouritism bestowed on Joseph. There was no equality in their home, and this is where the root of the problem lay.

Joseph wasn't responsible for the envy of his brothers, we can't blame Joseph for the root of envy in them, he was an innocent victim of something his father did. We must not allow the favour of the Lord upon someone cause us to envy them to their detriment. We must learn from this story and benefit from what happened to Joseph by not being envious of anyone being blessed.

Jealousy generated evil in his brothers, which was acted upon. When they saw him on his own, they planned to destroy him. He was sent by his father to see how his brothers were, little did his father know he was sending his son into a dangerous situation. This move by his father led him to.

2. Experience Jeopardy.

As he drew near to where his brothers where they plotted to destroy him by putting him into a hole in the ground, he was there until some travelling Ishmaelite's passed by on their way to Egypt to sell their goods, the brothers of Joseph decided to sell him rather than kill him.

He was sold and then bought by an Egyptian official Potiphar who put him in charge of his house. He was further put in Jeopardy when Potiphar the Egyptian official's wife accused him of assaulting her, and Joseph was put in prison, all this was because his brothers were jealous of him and sold h. The root of his problems can be traced to jealousy. Everything happening to him could be traced right back to his brother's envy.

So, Joseph experienced jealousy and jeopardy, now he was

3. Experiencing Jail.

Nothing could get any worse for Joseph, put in a pit, put up for sale at a slave market, now locked up in prison. He spent more than two years in prison, finally being released because a man whose dreams he interpreted remembered Joseph, recommending him to Pharaoh as an interpreter of dreams.

The Lord gave Joseph the meaning of the dreams Pharaoh had, which resulted in his release from prison. At last Joseph was

4. Experiencing Justice.

Justice could not have come at a better time for Joseph, he had endured what seemed to be endless trouble, but he never lost confidence in the Lord, the Lord was with Joseph and Joseph was with the Lord.

We don't read anywhere of Joseph reacting adversely to any situation he was in. We can learn so much about handling difficulties from the life and experiences off him. As Joseph is put in charge of the years of plenty that Egypt was blessed with, storing food in barns so that during the years of drought there was sufficient food for not only the Egyptians but other nations also.

The land of Canaan also experienced a drought. Jacob, Joseph's father sent his brothers to buy food from Egypt to sustain his family. The brothers who were responsible for Joseph's troubles went to Egypt and came face to face with Joseph.

How would Joseph deal with his brothers, he recognized them, but they did not know Joseph, what would he do to them who because of their Jealousy and the fact that he had to endure severe hardship over many years.

As a giant whose shoulders we stand on we will now see how he deals with his brothers who were responsible for what he had gone through. He is an example for us to follow on how to deal with jealousy. Let's take note of his actions in dealing

with his jealous brothers. I think Joseph realized that Jealousy does not destroy you, it destroys the ones who are jealous.

There are Three things Joseph did not do.
He didn't react negatively. Joseph never intended to harm his brothers, they harmed him, but he never had it within him to hurt any of them. The Lord had given him a righteous spirit and attitude, he was therefore a man at peace with God, himself and his brothers. To have retaliated would have been wrong and it would have destroyed him and taken away his peace.

He didn't retaliate. To have retaliated it would have been giving to them their just deserts, he would have been justified in punishing them just as they had punished him. But no he shows compassion and is merciful towards them, he exercises grace rather than punishment.

He was a gracious man, a great man, a good man, showing how we are to deal with Jealousy. Standing on his shoulders we succeed.

He didn't Seek retribution. A penalty for what they had done to Joseph would have been the just thing to do, Joseph didn't have it in his spirit to punish his brothers, he didn't intend to punish them, even though he would have been justified in doing so.

His brothers expected to be punished once they knew Joseph recognized them, but no he shows love and compassion, and grace supplying the provisions they needed to take back to their father Jacob.

The outstanding feature in this story is this he never took revenge on his brothers, what he did was, he recognized that behind all that had happened, was the providence of God. You meant what you did for evil, but God used it for Good.
Stand on his shoulders in situations that arise be like Joseph, a giant of God.